

ATTACHMENT - REMARKS

By this Amendment and pursuant to the RCE filed concurrently herewith, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the feature of dependent claim 2 (now canceled). It is submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance for the following reasons.

In the *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103* section of the DETAILED ACTION, independent claim 1 and dependent claims 4-7 were all rejected under 35 USC § 103 as being obvious over the principal Marttila patent in view of four additional references: the Cornils patent, the Cordes patent, the Jones patent, and the Hanai publication; while dependent claim 2 was rejected over this same combination of five references and further in view of the Honig patent. However, for the following reasons, it is submitted that amended independent claim 1 and claims 4-7 pending therefrom are all allowable over the cited combination of references.

Initially, it is noted that the claim 1 has been amended to include the feature of dependent claim 2 (now canceled) that the cooling step includes the steering of a cooling air flow only on the outer surface of the produced strip. Basis for this change is found in claim 2 and the discussion in the specification related to figures 7 and 8 (with figure 8 showing a blastpipe in which the blasted air is directed as shown in figure 7).

In association with the limitation of claim 2 added to claim 1, it will be noted that claim 1 also particularly recites that the cooling step is performed so that the plastic material of the outer strip surfaces of the edge strip cool and harden before the plastic material of a spot 15 (see figure 7) of the strip immediately adjacent the sheet edge. This feature is obviously enhanced by the steering of cooled air only on the outer

surface of the produced strip as now claimed. Thus, as noted in the specification in the first full paragraphs on pages 2 and/or 4, this causes the mass of spot 15 of the strip to cool last, whereby in cooling this mass 15 shrinks resulting in an advantageous compressive fit of the edge strip onto the edge of the conductive sheet. This shrinkage/compression is also achieved with the mass inside of the claimed holes, further securing the strip to the conductive sheet. In order to better achieve this shrinkage/compression, the edge of the sheet is pre-heated as part of the fitting of the sheet into the die space, and the die space with the sheet edge therein also heated as part of the feeding step (see e.g., figure 2 and the Abstract).

As result of the addition of subject matter from claim 2 to claim 1, it will also be appreciated that the relevant rejection is thus the combination of the principal Marttila patent and five additional references: the Cornils patent, the Cordes patent, the Jones patent, the Hanai publication, and the Honig patent.

The Marttila patent discloses a method for producing a mother plate for electrolytic cleaning using a plate of metal having edges on which a plastic strip is extruded. The edge of the plate can be provided with perforations to better attach the edge mould to the plate. In the disclosed method, the extruder is moved along a stationary mould 7 to form the plastic strip, with the mould 7 being detached from the plate "after the strip material is solidified" (see 2/43-44).

The Cornils patent discloses a device for extruding an edge strip where an extruder and associated die moves along the plate edge. In the Action, the examiner has asserted that it would be obvious to use the teachings of the Cornils patent with the Marttila patent in order to have an extruder and associated die that move together along

the plate edge. However, as the Marttila patent specifically teaches that the mould 7 should remain in place until after the strip material has solidified, that teaching is contrary to the suggested hybrid combination of a moving mould and thus would not be obvious as alleged. And in view of the examiner suggested motivations, it is thus submitted that such a hybrid combination would not result from a simple substitution, and the suggested hybrid combination would not simplify the process as alleged but rather complicate it.

In the Action, the examiner has also asserted that the previously claimed cooling step is inherent in the hybrid device when the strip is exposed to "ambient air". However, as the edge strip is being applied to a metal plate, it is not necessarily inherent that cooling in the edge strip will take place from the outside in, as metal is typically a much better conductor of heat. Therefore, it is also possible (and given the extent of the edge strip being cooled, probable) that as the metal conducts the heat away from the edge strip and additionally for convective cooling from the heat conducted to the exposed metal, such metal cooling (over a large surface area) will predominate over the convective cooling at the comparatively smaller area of the edge strip outer surface. See the cited Hanai publication as well which discusses the rapid solidification effected by a plate on an edge strip. As a result, the examiner's assertion of inherency seems misplaced.

In addition, it is now particularly claimed that the cooling step includes the step of steering a cooling air flow only on the outer surface of the produced strip, as by the blastpipe disclosed in figure 8. Such a controlled application of an air blast is not disclosed in any of the references. And in particular, such a step is not disclosed in the

Honig patent where only a general "cooling device" which applies air or water is disclosed (see ¶ 44, also noted by the examiner).

In the Action, the examiner further asserted that the pre-heating step was made obvious by a combination of the Jones patent and the Hanai publication (as part of the six reference combination). The disclosure of the Jones patent is merely that a sheet can be heated and that an applied polymer can be heated as well to a temperature above or below that of the plate. Such a teaching would have little applicability to the specific pre-heating step claimed, as it does not positively teach one way or the other, much less in the same environment (one side of a plate versus only an edge of a plate). In addition, the Hanai publication has as a purpose that "the extruded molding materials are substantially uniformly solidified" (see ¶ 68 cited by the examiner). Thus, this patent also teaches away from the resultant cooling step claimed where the outer strip surface is cools and hardens before a spot adjacent the sheet edge (the opposite of a uniform solidification).

It is also submitted that the use of six different references in order to make this rejection serves as well to show that the examiner is picking and selecting specific features from the various references in an impermissible hindsight reconstruction of the present invention. It is recognized that the "[r]eliance on a large number of references in a rejection does not, without more, weigh against the obviousness of the claimed invention" (see MPEP 2145). However, the more references which must be used by the examiner does tend to show that those of ordinary skill had not made or considered the present invention since the alleged teachings must come from so many different places with so many disparate overall teachings and effects. Therefore, it is submitted that this

hybrid combination of six references suggested by the examiner is not obvious but a hindsight reconstruction.

Therefore, for all of the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that amended independent claim 1 is not made obvious by the hybrid combination of the various teachings of the principal Martila patent in view of the Cornils patent, the Cordes patent, the Jones patent, the Hanai publication, and the Honig patent; so that independent claim 1 is allowable. For these same reasons, it is submitted that claims 4-8 dependent therefrom are likewise allowable.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and such action is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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